

# **KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

## **STAFF NOTE**

### **Review Item:**

Minority Superintendent Internship Program (MSIP)

### **Applicable Statute or Regulation:**

KRS 160.380 (2)(d), 704 KAR 7:130

### **History/Background:**

***Existing Policy.*** In an effort to successfully implement all aspects of the Kentucky Education Reform Act, the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) has implemented a series of efforts to ensure the representation of all ethnic groups at all levels within the state's teacher, principal and administrator workforce. These initiatives are collective partnerships between local school districts, universities and the Kentucky Department of Education. The department's goal of educating all children must represent every aspect of the educational process including identifying, recruiting and supporting a highly qualified and diverse workforce. All students deserve educators that reflect the educational, cultural and geographic representation of our great state.

The Division of Educator Quality and Diversity (DEQD) aims to assist Kentucky schools and districts in the implementation of best practices for identifying, recruiting and retaining a diverse teaching and administrative workforce. To champion such an important initiative as the equitable representation of cultures and ethnicities to support the complete education of all students continues to be a challenge at all levels.

One of the most challenging problems facing Kentucky's schools in the quest to close the achievement gap is the critical need for diverse, highly qualified, responsible, accountable and enlightened leadership. There is a consensus in Kentucky that district leaders who provide sound, productive teaching and learning, centered on high standards for students will offer solutions to many of our schools' problems.

The Minority Superintendent Internship Program (MSIP) is designed to help identify and train a pool of highly qualified, minority superintendent candidates for Kentucky's school districts. The program is based on providing qualified candidates with actual hands-on experience as educational leaders.

The MSIP is a one-year (July 1st-June 30th) leadership development program for minorities who wish to pursue a position as a Kentucky school superintendent. This non-traditional leadership development program responds to the appreciation that a minority school superintendent may be faced with unique and complex problems as an educational

leader. Further, this program recognizes the necessity for a pool of diverse individuals prepared to successfully meet the academic and fiscal challenges of accountability in our schools.

MSIP emphasizes the development of leadership skills to increase student learning including skills in the areas of: management, strategic planning, fiscal oversight, communication, community engagement, the politics of education, and analyses of current exemplary teaching and learning strategies, as well as complex social and educational issues. Participants will engage in activities such as workshops, collaborative learning experiences, practical experience, mentor/mentee sessions, and meetings with local, state, and national education officials and experts.

The goal of the MSIP is to enable the interns to interact with highly qualified practicing superintendents, board members, search consultants, state policy makers and “educational thinkers” in a focused way to broaden their knowledge base about the work of superintendents.

KDE revitalized the MSIP initiative in March 2007. The invitation to participate was advertised and yielded five applicants. After a thorough review of applications, Ms. Demetria Choice was selected and then paired with Mr. Tim Hanner, Superintendent of Kenton County Public Schools, as her mentor. The mentor and mentee relationship is critical to the success of the program. Mr. Hanner and Ms. Choice crafted a rigorous learning opportunity beginning with an individual professional growth plan depicting the role of a superintendent. Ms. Choice also participated in the New Superintendent Training Modules, visited with other local districts and attended national conferences. Ms. Choice submitted quarterly reports outlining her learning experience and was an active participant in the Superintendent’s CEO Network.

As for the future of MSIP, a press release was recently issued and established a new application window beginning March 3<sup>rd</sup> and ending March 31<sup>st</sup>. This year KDE’s goal is to identify approximately three interns to participate in the program. Reaching this goal will bring the initiative in line with the number of participants during the first year's implementation. Additionally, we hope to establish a pipeline development initiative designed to ensure highly qualified candidates are recruited each year.

KDE continues to assist districts and schools with recruiting talented individuals who can have a real impact on increasing diversity in Kentucky’s schools. The Division of Educator Quality and Diversity will continue efforts to guide, support and assist local school districts as they increase and enhance efforts to recruit minorities into the profession education specifically in the role of superintendents and other district level leadership positions.

### **Policy Issues:**

1. What other means should be pursued to increase the number of minorities interested and willing to serve as district level leaders?

**Impact on Getting to Proficiency:**

Ensuring that there are sufficient minority personnel at all levels will provide caring adults and successful role models with a special interest in minority students that will assist in closing the gaps, thus moving more students and schools to proficiency. Initiatives such as MSIP will remove historical barriers that have subjectively discouraged minorities from pursuing leadership positions. Further, these efforts will promote a united effort to address not only diversity but also the true identification of a highly qualified educator workforce.

**Contact Person:**

Michael D. Dailey  
Director  
Division of Educator Quality & Diversity  
Improvement  
502/564-1479  
[Michael.dailey@education.ky.gov](mailto:Michael.dailey@education.ky.gov)

Stephen Schenck  
Associate Commissioner  
Office of Leadership & School  
502/564-2116  
[Stephen.Schenck@education.ky.gov](mailto:Stephen.Schenck@education.ky.gov)

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**Deputy Commissioner**

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**Commissioner of Education**

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